



Mormon Games People Play

THE STRATEGIES AND DIVERSIONS OF LATTER-DAY SAINT APOLOGISTS

by Stephen F. Cannon

Anyone who allows a discussion with a member of the Latter-day Saint church to move beyond a doorstep dialogue will encounter a number of semantic strategies. For example, while doing research for my article "Deception: The Legacy of the Mormon Prophets,"¹ this writer also was carrying on correspondence with several LDS "apologists" on a variety of subjects relative to the truthfulness of the Mormon church and its claims. One particular exchange of letters lasted about a year.² And within the apologists' various rebuttals, I was adequately reminded of many classic examples of the contorted thinking and semantic gymnastics played in modern LDS apologetics.

THE "ANTI" LABEL

A frequent and fundamental campaign by Latter-day Saints is a disavowing of the facts presented by simply labeling the source as "anti-Mormon." Authors Bill McKeever and Eric Johnson define the expression as:

"A name usually attributed to 'Bible Christians' who try to evangelize Mormons. Oftentimes Mormons accuse such people of being motivated by hatred and bigotry."³

This writer has seen rank-and-file Mormons "tune out" valid historical information that put their church leaders in a negative light simply

because it came from an "anti-Mormon." I believe it is advantageous for Mormon scholars to put critics in as negative a light as possible so as to keep the maximum number of church members isolated from revealing facts. The first line of defense seems to be getting that "anti-Mormon" label painted on critics as quickly as possible.

Christians will do well to establish some ground rules in their "give and take," discussions with Mormons. They should readily take exception to the epithet of being an "anti-Mormon." Unfortunately, that word is thrown about with the intention of some to isolate critics of the LDS church. Even a basic understanding of the history of the LDS people reveals that the word "anti-Mormon" psychologically conjures up images of mobs, persecutors, and ultimately a murdered prophet.

Some Mormon apologists may object, claiming they are a people who are beyond such thinking and are not neurotic about persecution. However, the fact is that many LDS are still very sensitive to the persecution committed against their early church. This is especially true when those known as "anti-Mormons" publicly level criticism against their church.

It is also helpful to know that Mormons are a group of people united around a belief system. There-

fore, to be "anti-Mormon" is to be against people. Christians who desire to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ to Mormons are never to come against people of any stripe. Yes, evangelical Christians do have strong disagreements with Mormonism, but the argument is with a belief system and not a people. The LDS people are no better or no worse than any other group of people. Any dispute is to be a disagreement with the "ism," not the "Mormon."

While we must be careful and resolute in communicating this vital fact, not all Mormons will be indulgent of the distinction. Consider, for example, comments from one of the letters from my Mormon apologist friend. Here I was informed, as to my differentiating between the people and their beliefs, that:

"To me this is hair splitting. Frankly I don't care whether you are against me as a person or not. *To me an anti-Mormon is one who may be against Mormons or Mormonism — it is of little consequence.* If I use the phrase 'anti-Mormon' and do not technically add the suffix 'ism' it does not mean I'm using the word the way you define it. *If you are against my faith to the degree that you attack it through writing or speech, I consider you an anti-Mormon. It is all the more true if you have a ministry, such as (name*

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lative, controlling atmosphere at all levels of TWI. Since all decisions must be approved by overseers, TWI has become much like the communist USSR was: they assume that if something is not specifically allowed, then it must be forbidden. As a result, The Way "Robot Corps" lives and works in a lockstep, robotic fashion. While founder V.P. Wierwille established "The Way Tree" as a means to control everyone and everything related to TWI, even he probably never imagined how manipulative the tree would become.

This is much different from most pastors and leaders of Christian churches, who are free to direct their own ministry, decide how to best use their personal income and time, choose from many potential Christian life partners, and adjust their dress and ministry to fit local needs and circumstances.

WHAT DOES THE "ROBOT CORPS" SUGGEST ABOUT THE TRUSTEES?

The Trustees who make all decisions and are the only legal members

of TWI are L. Craig Martindale, Rosalie Rivenbark and John Reynolds. Since they make all policies, the way they treat the Corps members gives insights into the character and nature of the Trustees.


First, the rules imply that the Trustees do not trust the Corps members. The Trustees legislate, control, and approve every aspect of the Corps members' personal and work lives. Apparently, they think that the Corps members are completely unable to lead themselves or others. And if the Trustees, who know Corps grads well, don't trust the Corps members — then why should believers trust Corps grads who oversee them?

Second, the Trustees must provide poor leadership training if grads are unable to lead themselves or others, take initiative, evaluate their own work, design their own teachings and be self-starters.

Third, these policies suggest that the Trustees consider manipulating and micromanaging Corps members lives to be one of their main functions. They seem to guide the Corps mem-

bers by inspecting rather than by inspiring and setting an example.

One thing the Corps members policies do *not* mention is *freedom*. The New Testament, on the other hand, emphasizes freedom. Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31-32). Of course, TWI spends very little effort studying Jesus' teachings, since it ridicules them as being meant for people long dead rather than for themselves. Galatians 5:1 also warns us, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery." These are passages for Corps members to reflect on as they seek approvals and fear reprovals.

Editor's Note: The Corps policies cited above and other letters from Way President Craig Martindale to the Corps can be viewed in their original form at The WayDale Document Archive web site. Additional information of The Way International may be found on Dr. Juedes' web site: www.empirenet.com/~messiah7. 

GAMES MORMON PEOPLE PLAY

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*omitted), that intentionally fights against it by publishing a web site for that purpose. The same may be said for those who publish anti-Mormon (ism) pamphlets, books, articles, or who attend LDS gatherings to picket, oppose, ridicule, attack, pass out their literature, and the like."*⁴

Thus, for this particular LDS, there appears to be no substantive difference between criticizing the doctrines of the church or attacking the Mormon people. If you do one, then you are guilty of the other. This, in his estimation, is especially true if you publish anything against his beliefs. If you do this, then you are "anti-Mormon."

Moreover, a quick way for LDS members to find themselves excom-

municated from their church is to "speak out" or "preach" anything the church authorities consider false doctrine. In a recent appearance on *Larry King Live*, Gordon B. Hinckley, the current "Prophet" of the LDS church, had this exchange with the popular talk show host:

King: "Are people ever thrown out of your church?"

Hinckley: "Yes."

King: "For?"

Hinckley: "Doing what they shouldn't do, preaching false doctrine, speaking out publicly. They can carry all the opinion they wish within their heads, so to speak, but if they begin to try to persuade others, then they may be called in to a disciplinary council. We don't excommunicate many, but we do some."⁵

WHO'S ATTACKING WHOM?

Closely related to the "anti-Mormon" labeling strategy is the question

from Latter-day Saints as to why Christians openly criticize and discredit their church. Observations again expressed during my conversation with the Mormon apologist bear this out:

"Mormons are not on a campaign to destroy any particular religion. Indeed, we are aware that the major religious leaders have been inspired by God to give various peoples a degree of light and truth, and we know their religions will not likely disappear regardless of how successful our missionary efforts are. Thus we say, we are positively preaching our message which of course includes statements such as that we have the fullness of the gospel and other religions do not. In that offer we invite people to keep the truth they have and accept the additional truth we offer. If we are rejected, we honor that decision."

True, the Mormons are not on a campaign to *destroy* any particular religion. The LDS church is on a campaign to *supplant all other religions!* Are converts really allowed to “keep the truth they have”? What if the convert has previously accepted Jesus Christ as who He said He was, accepted His sacrifice as propitiation for their sins and been baptized by immersion for remission of their sins at their present church? No honest Mormon could ever deny that this person would not be rebaptized if he joined the LDS church. The very definition of *truth* within the matrix of Mormonism runs counter to *truth* in the outside world. Outside of the milieu of LDS thought, truth is deduced by the laws of logic and evidence, while inside, truth is decreed by church leaders and confirmed by a subjective feeling known as “Testimony.”

My apologist’s comments become even more emphatic:

“Where is there an LDS Church operated, or even a private, web site which focuses on another specific religion and its errors, such as the Hutterites? Where can you point to a regular and ongoing publication of books by Mormons against the Methodists, for example? Can you lead me to a Mormon-produced video which attacks the Baptists for over an hour? Not to mention a healthy packet of supporting literature. Or how about a Mormon-produced video about Calvinists entitled ‘The God Breakers’ or something like that? Can you point to an LDS effort to expose, ridicule or mock the sacred practices, ordinances or rituals of say, the Druze or the Jews? Can you show a church-organized effort, led by general or local LDS leaders to picket, parade, carry placards, hand out literature, or debate with a group, such as the Church of Christ, at their conferences, meetings, and building dedications? Do you know of a time when LDS members or leaders went on a TV or radio talk show to argue

against the teachings of the Christian Scientists? Can you give evidence of a continuing effort in the LDS Church where stake presidents, bishops or branch presidents sponsor a Mormon expert to come to their meetings and warn of the evils of say Islam, for 45 minutes or an hour? Do you know of a ward or stake that approves of a Mormon Sunday School teacher taking the entire class time to attack the dress practices of the Amish, the marriage customs of the Moonies or the missionary tactics of the Jehovah’s Witnesses? Do you know of any Mormon book or pamphlet that has a title such as, *The Evils of The Evangelical United Brethren*, *The Greek Orthodox Menace*, or *The Counterfeit Gospel Of The Church of England*? Can you point to an article in a professional journal by a Mormon which criticizes say, the way the Spirit falls on the Pentecostals or the testimony meetings of the Quakers? Can you give me a bibliography of Mormon biographies seeking to dig up every conceivable piece of dirt on Martin Luther, John Calvin, any Pope you want, Alexander Campbell, Billy Sunday, Dwight Moody, Billy Graham, Mohammed, Buddha, Confucius, John Knox, Joseph Smith III, or any other religious leader for that matter?”

The dominant motive for researching and writing against LDS theology, by this writer, is to respond to the challenges of Joseph Smith and others from within the LDS environment. I have read those overflow of challenges and it is very easily understood what is or isn’t being said. The challenges go far beyond Joseph Smith and have been an integral part of LDS thought from the beginning. Clearly, historic biblical Christianity was here first. In the 1800s, Joseph Smith Jr. came along, said he heard from God that all extant churches were “wrong... their creeds an abomination, and ...those professors were all corrupt.”⁶ There was the challenge. There was the attack.

Once the challenge is issued you either accept it or you don’t. It then becomes an issue of whether or not Smith was telling the truth. If he was telling the truth, then he really is the Prophet of the restoration and everyone should be looking for the nearest LDS baptismal font. If there is credible evidence that he isn’t who he said he was, then we should be shouting it from the rooftops.

THE REAL MESSAGE OF MORMONISM

According to Mormon doctrine, the prime directive of God to Joseph Smith was not to join any Catholic or Protestant church — for they were all corrupt, apostate, and an abomination — but to restore the one true church.

It was this directive that caused Smith to establish his church in 1830.

It was this directive that caused God (if you believe *The Book of Mormon* is inspired) to reveal that there are only two churches — the church of the Devil and the church of the Lamb (1 Nephi 14:10).

It was this directive that caused LDS Apostle Orson Pratt to teach that marriages outside of the LDS church were illegal and the children of those marriages are illegitimate.⁷

It was this directive that caused LDS Apostle Charles W. Penrose to state in his *Rays of Living Light — Divine Authority* that Christian creeds are valueless⁸ and that Christendom has *no* inspired apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers and hence no authority.⁹

It was this directive that caused the LDS church to produce a tract in 1982 titled “Which Church Is Right?” and state on page 17 that other churches cannot save souls and that they have *no* divine authority.

It was this directive that prompted the LDS church to publish the words of Brigham Young University Professor Kent P. Jackson that Satan sits as head of Christian churches¹⁰ and Apostle Boyd K. Packer’s statement that baptism and other ordinances by other churches are not recognized.¹¹

And finally, it is this directive that causes LDS missionaries to go door-to-door by the multiplied thousands with the agenda to convince the householder that their church is right and *all* others wrong.

That directive was the original challenge of Joseph Smith to *all of Christianity*. It began the debate. That was the spiritual “shot heard round the world” and that trashing of all extant Christianity is the bedrock of the LDS church. The allegation that the LDS just propagates their belief positively and doesn’t run down other religions doesn’t hold up. Whenever an LDS missionary, member or apologist preaches the Mormon gospel — his entire thesis begins with the prime directive, it begins with an attack!

When the smoke clears and the dust settles, the fact is that when the LDS (or any other) church claims it has exclusive ownership of the truth it does not have to have the specificity mentioned above by my Mormon apologist friend. If one believes that “they were all wrong, their creeds were an abomination, those professors were all corrupt” then it is wasted effort to point out individual disagreements.

With the stroke of a pen, you just attack them *all* without degree or specificity as stated in *The Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, The Pearl of Great Price* and the other doctrinal and Mormon generated works mentioned.

Christian author and missionary to Mormons, Bill McKeever, also notes that “Until April 1990, the most blatant criticisms and mockeries against Christianity were found in their temple ceremony.” In the Mormons’ sacred and secret ritual, the beliefs of the Christian faith were ridiculed and Christian ministers were portrayed as unwitting pawns hired by Satan to preach false doctrine.¹²

McKeever also concludes that:

“It is not true that Mormonism does not attack Christianity. Its very tenets are an affront to Christianity as a whole, since they believe the work of Christ was not enough to save man.

The Mormon believes Christ died and rose again merely to pave the way for all men to be resurrected. Salvation, or exaltation, is solely dependent upon the works of men.”¹³

CLEARING THE AIR

For those who engage in a continuous dialogue with Mormons, it may soon be evident that with certain Latter-day Saints, especially those who actually hold — or merely perceive that they hold — positions of authority, an air of superiority will manifest itself. This “air” most often appears when a gentile¹⁴ in a debate makes an error.

This writer was reminded of this maneuver during a discussion of the integrity of the LDS church’s leadership with the Mormon apologist. During our interchanges, we debated several subjects related to the dishonesty of LDS leaders until I leveled the charge of dishonesty against Joseph Smith as it related to the doctrine of polygamy. I made the charge that Smith was publicly denying the practice while secretly practicing it. The Mormon apologist challenged me to present my best examples of Smith’s mendacity and he would dispel all doubts that Smith was dishonest. In mid-April of 1999 I posted my charges¹⁵ and waited to hear back.

As this tactic is presented, I do not make my observation as mere justification. For without excuse, in my haste to post my initial charges, I made a glaring historical blunder. It is an opportunity for others to learn from my mistake and be adequately aware of the necessity of accuracy, so as not to allow this superior air to occur. While my error was more than trivial, this necessity for accuracy extends to the smallest detail. The history and evolving theology of the Mormon church is a broad and vast expanse of which even the careful student may find himself in a seemingly endless maze. Nevertheless, the need for accuracy in handling sources is an absolute.

Unfortunately, I have witnessed meaningful dialogue cut off because

of mistakes in historical minutiae, and actual historical facts neutralized with such charges as: “It is obvious that ‘Mr. Anti’ can’t be trusted in his attack because of his inability to get the facts straight. He should spend more time polishing up his scholarship than trying to criticize our religion.”

While my Mormon apologist friend did not blatantly demonstrate this strategy in ways I have seen in past discussions, it was still apparent.

In addressing the dishonesty of Joseph Smith in the specific area of his embracing the doctrine of plural marriage, among several evidences, I stated that Smith knew about the doctrine of plural marriage as early as 1831 and yet it was denied in the 1833 *Book of Commandments*. However, the document to which I appealed, “Article on Marriage,” did not appear in the 1833 edition of *Book of Commandments*.

The Mormon apologist rightly (and historically) responded that:

“The ‘Article on Marriage’ was not among the documents published in that volume. In the summer of 1833 a mob destroyed the press in Independence, Missouri. By 1835 the Church purchased another press and the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants was published at Kirtland [Ohio]. It included the earlier material plus new revelations, the Article on Marriage, an article on Government, and the Lectures on Faith.”

I responded to his correction and admitted:

“You are absolutely correct in pointing out my error in chronology and authorship regarding the ‘Article On Marriage’ that appeared in D&C-1835 vs. the 1833 BOC. There is no other way to address the issue other than to say, ‘I blew it.’ There are reasons why I made the blunder, but there are no excuses, so I won’t offer any. You were right in your assessment, I was wrong in my

original conclusion. I made an assumption, and you know what happens when you assume (old cliché). I will strive mightily to slow down, so as to be more accurate. I do not want to minimize the importance of accuracy and proper handling of sources."

I went on to show that while I had made an historical blunder, it still did not change my thesis that Smith had lied about practicing polygamy while publicly condemning it, and presented other documentation to that effect.

Despite my admission, a draft of the "air of superiority" began to blow. He articulated to me in a subsequent letter:

"In the black and white world of the evangelical mind set, it is easy to accuse Joseph of dishonesty. But in the world of spiritual realities, it is possible that the Lord told Joseph something that he was to keep secret for the public for a time. ... Steve, I wonder if I might offer an observation or two without being overly offensive. In this reply I have once again detailed serious historical errors in your analysis. As you recall this has happened several times in our discussions during the past year. At this point, I think it is fair to say that you are not as familiar with LDS history as perhaps you first thought or wanted me to believe. Moreover, more than once your errors of historical fact have been the sandy foundation for dubious if not erroneous conclusions that support your anti-Mormon position. Most critics attack the historical foundations of the Church and the character of its founder. Repeatedly you have come up short on those two matters. May I respectfully suggest in light of these repeated and often elementary mistakes, that you jettison sweeping misguided beliefs, such as the one about Mormonism's deceitful ways, which you find so convenient in dismissing The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-

day Saints and go back and do a thorough re-reading of LDS history and scripture? I believe you have a basically honest heart, and if you will start again, without the anti-Mormon baggage, I'm confident you will discover that the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ as restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith is incomparable in providing insight, meaning and understanding of Christ and his mission. Furthermore you will find that Joseph Smith was, and I testify that he was, full of integrity."

Notwithstanding several citations from early LDS church leaders that demonstrated a pattern of "lying for the Lord" on various doctrinal issues (especially polygamy), the evidence raised all seemed to take a back seat because of "my error in chronology and authorship regarding the 'Article On Marriage.'"

In this effort to deprecate comes a glaring example of selective criterion on the Latter-day Saints' part. While my apologist friend had decried dishonesty on the part of some critics of his church (and rightly so), Mormons are reluctant to apply the same rigorous standard of honesty to their own leaders. Many times they will view any evidence of impropriety on their leaders' part through the lens of "testimony," to overthrow any possibility of institutionalized dishonesty.

As we consider the claims and statements of the past and present leadership of the LDS church, it must not be overlooked that it is one thing for an ordinary person like me to make a theological mistake, draw an erroneous conclusion, or stutter-step in doctrine. It is entirely different coming from one who has taken upon himself the mantle of authority as being a mouthpiece of God. It would be another situation entirely if I took upon myself a mantle of authority and made the claim that I am a literal mouthpiece of God, and when I speak on matters spiritual, it is the same as God speaking. Once in that position, the standard to which I should be held leaps off the known chart. This is

the standard to which all Latter-day prophets and apostles should be held, especially Joseph Smith.

PULLING THE PLUG

Often, the final and definitive course for Mormons in dialogue is merely to bail out of the discussion. After I posted a response to the Mormon apologist in late August of 1999, answering point one of his rebuttal, our communications began taking a strange turn. While I was researching and writing my rebuttal to the other four points of our argument, there were short messages sent to him that I was working on answers and would send them as soon as possible. I began to notice that his replies became testy.

A few weeks later, I sent a correspondence saying that I was revamping my rebuttal to point number one, and then proceeding to move to the other points. He responded that, "I look forward to it and trust the time will have allowed you to avoid the simple factual mistakes of past posts."

However, his anticipation was tempered with:

"I marvel that a man with apparent education and humanity harbors such prejudice and cannot avoid continual trite jibes on the subject of perceived Mormon deception, manipulation and conspiracy. I despair of disabusing you of such jingoism and truly wonder if this correspondence is worth pursuing. It certainly is wearisome. ... Especially from sideline critics for whom truth often seems to take second best to simply winning a verbal joust."

I responded that any continuation of correspondence was his decision, and if he chose to, we would end it. I don't know his motivation for doing so, but he chose to end the conversation, I honored his decision and our discussion ended.


My prayer is that those of you who have an opportunity to read some of this exchange will benefit in understanding a little more of the LDS

mind set, and in so doing, become more efficient ambassadors for Christ.

Endnotes:

1. "Deception: The Legacy of the Mormon Prophets," *The Quarterly Journal*, Oct.-Dec. 1999, pp. 4-12.
2. My correspondence with this particular Mormon apologist began in late 1998. He contacted me via e-mail because of some statements that I had made in my article on the book, *How Wide the Divide* (see, "Still Wide the Divide — A Critical Analysis of a Mormon and an Evangelical in Dialogue," *The Quarterly Journal*, Oct.-Dec. 1997, pp. 1, 12-18). Our debate continued until the fall of 1999 when he decided to end our communication.

3. Bill McKeever and Eric Johnson, *Questions to Ask Your Mormon Friend*. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1994, pg. 145.
4. Because I do not have permission to use his name outside of our correspondence, I am keeping his identity confidential. Emphasis added.
5. *Larry King Live* broadcast, Sept. 8, 1998, video tape on file.
6. *Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith History 1:19.
7. *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 16, pp. 175-176.
8. Charles W. Penrose, *Rays of Living Light — Divine Authority*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, no date, pg. 2.
9. *Ibid.*, pg. 3.

10. Kent P. Jackson, "Early Signs of the Apostasy," *The Ensign* magazine, December 1984, pp. 8-9.
11. Boyd K. Packer, "The Only True Church," *The Ensign* magazine, November 1985, pg. 82.
12. Bill McKeever, *Answering Mormons' Questions*. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1991, pp. 16-17.
13. *Ibid.*, pg. 17.
14. The designation "gentile" to a Mormon refers to any non-member of their church. See for example, Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Second Edition, 1966, pp. 310-311.
15. Most of my arguments may be read in "Deception: The Legacy of the Mormon Prophets" article, op. cit. 

ERRORS OF JESSIE PENN-LEWIS

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cripple growth. Paul in 1 Corinthians 12 shows that the confusion in Corinth had its genesis in those who pressed for one gift for everyone and had a one-size-fits-all philosophy in regard to tongues. We are all unique individuals and all uniquely gifted. Body life in the Church like the human body consists of various unique parts. This is a basic and fundamental truth that was somehow misunderstood in the genre of Christianity prevalent at the mid-to-late 18th century. Many Christian leaders gave lip service to some differences but created a mold to enter "the higher life." These views still predominate today in some parts of the Church at large.

Almost every Christian in the time of Penn-Lewis (1861-1927), was expected to move into experiences that were variously called the "higher life," "holiness" and also called "entire sanctification" and "Keswick holiness."² This grew out of some extremes in the Wesleyan movement.

Not that those promoting it were always that holy, for the movement often produced pride, judgmentalism, elitism, obstinacy and division. Many of its leaders, before and after Penn-Lewis, were shamefully inconstant.³ Some strains of "the higher life movement" taught that the believer could get to a state where they would not

and could not ever sin again. There was a spectrum of contradictions and extremes.

Though Penn-Lewis asserted, "Let us not ask Him to put us all in one mold of experience," a few sentences later she reverses field and says, "There is no *gradual* deliverance from sin, no gradual process of death to sin or deliverance from the world, or the flesh."⁴ So every believer was to look for this instantaneous experience.

It was into this cultural religious milieu that Jessie Jones (who, at age 19, married William Penn-Lewis) was born on Feb. 28, 1861. Though born to a Calvinistic Methodist pastor father, she often is called a Welsh mystic because of her wide exposure to and connection with the Quakers in her formative years.

ERROR REPEATED AND MULTIPLIED

Penn-Lewis cannot be understood or analyzed without some grasp of the Christian subculture in which she swam. Though the experiences to be sought after conversion were sometimes referred to as "the baptism in the Spirit," it had nothing to do with Pentecostalism or tongues-speaking. Penn-Lewis saw most of that as "demonic," especially in her later years. That and other things led her to believe and teach that Satan had invaded the earth in a new, direct and intensive way, fulfilling parts of the

Book of Revelation. Her days, she truly believed, were the last days. Everyone's days were numbered.

This kind of intensive paranoia is not new in the history of the Church. As far back as the 12th century, Joachim of Fiore promoted end time scenarios as did the later misled Seventh-day Adventists of the 19th century.⁵

Time has shown that Penn-Lewis did not have the inside spiritual information on the future that she claimed to have but that it was a product of her overactive imagination and her times. We can be affected by society and not Scripture. She seriously misread her days.

The unfortunate thing is that her strange twist on Satan's domination of the Church led Penn-Lewis to teach that Christians could be inhabited by invading, indwelling demons — an error repeated by many today with Penn-Lewis as the source.⁶

Respected pastor and theologian Donald Grey Barnhouse commented strongly that demons cannot come into one who is born again since they have become the temple of the Holy Spirit:

"We put forth this statement categorically in spite of the works of the English group known as the Overcomers, whose bible is frequently Mrs. Penn-Lewis' book, *War on the*